

Message Text

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PAGE 01 USBERL 02105 171712Z

14

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01

SAJ-01 IO-10 ACDA-05 /076 W

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R 171600Z OCT 75

FM USMISSION USBERLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1564

INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L USBERLIN 2105

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PFOR, WB, GW, UR

SUBJECT: CANCELLATION OF SOVIET MAYORS' VISIT

TO WEST BERLIN

REF: USBERLIN 2044

1. SUMMARY: VISIT BY GROUP OF SOVIET MAYORS TO
WEST BERLIN SCHEDULED FOR OCT 16-19 AS CONCLUDING
STOP ON TWO-WEEK TOUR OF WEST GERMAN CITIES WAS
CANCELLED BY SOVIETS WITHOUT EXPLANATION AT VERY
LAST MINUTE. SENAT, INCENSED AT CAVALIER SOVIET
ACTION, HAS PUBLICLY THREATENED TO RECONSIDER ITS
GENERAL POLICY OF WELCOMING AND SUPPORTING SOVIET-
SPONSORED EVENTS IN BERLIN. CANCELLATION IS
APPARENTLY TO BE ATTRIBUTED TO SOVIET SECOND THOUGHTS
THAT VISIT TO CITY WITHIN CONTEXT OF FRG TOUR AND
UNDER AUSPICES OF FRG ASSOCIATION AMOUNTED TO TOO
STRONG AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF BERLIN-FRG TIES FOR
THEIR TASTE. END SUMMARY
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PAGE 02 USBERL 02105 171712Z

2. REPORTS ARE THAT BERLIN'S INCLUSION IN EIGHT-CITY TOUR SPONSORED BY PRIVATE GERMAN CONFERENCE OF CITIES (DEUTSCHE STAEDTETAG) WAS ARRANGED WELL IN ADVANCE DURING NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN BREMEN MAYOR KOSCHNICK, STAEDTETAG PRESIDENT, AND SOVIET COUNTERPARTS. ACCORDING TO SENAT SPOKESMAN STRUVE, BOTH SIDES AGREED TO CONSIDER BERLIN AND FRG VISITS AS ELEMENTS OF "UNIFIED PROGRAM." DOUBTLESS WELCOMING THIS OBTINSEABLE AFFIRMATION OF FRG-BERLIN TIES, SENAT HAD PREPARED UNUSUALLY RICH SCHEDULE FOR SIX-MAN SOVIET DELEGATION, WHICH INCLUDED EXTENSIVE "TOWN-PLANNING" TOUR, RECEPTION BY GOVMAYOR, LUNCHEONS HOSTED BY MAYOR AND HOUSE OF REPS LEADERSHIP, AND OPERA AND CONCERT PERFORMANCES. THIS SCHEDULE WAS MADE AVAILABLE TO LOCAL SOVIET REPS OCT 8, BUT IT WAS NOT UNTIL OCT 15 THAT CONSUL GENERAL SHARKOV APPROACHED HEAD OF SENAT CHANCELLERY HERZ TO EXPRESS DISSATISFACTION AT CERTAIN ITEMS-- A REFLECTION, APPARENTLY, OF SECOND THOUGHTS THEN GOING ON IN MOSCOW. SPECIFICALLY, SHARKOV REQUESTED THAT PLANNED VISIT TO OFFICES OF DEUTSCHE INSTITUT FUER URBANISTIK BE STRICKEN, CITING AS GROUNDS AFFILIATION OF INSTITUTE WITH CONFERENCE OF CITIES, BERLIN'S MEMBERSHIP IN WHICH SOVIETS DID NOT RECOGNIZE. HERZ COUNTERED THAT THIS WAS BERLIN INSTITUTE SUPPORTED BY SENAT FUNDS, BUT AGREED TO INQUIRE WHETHER MEETING WITH INSTITUTE'S DIRECTOR COULD BE SHIFTED TO ANOTHER SITE (THIS WAS SUBSEQUENTLY ARRANGED). SHARKOV ALSO SOUGHT ASSURANCES FROM HERZ THAT REPORTING OF MAYORS' VISIT, REQUEST THAT PROMPTED COMMENT FROM HERZ THAT SHARKOV SHOULD KNOW BY NOW HOW WESTERN PRESS OPERATED.

3. AFTER HURRIEDLY ARRANGING APPOINTMENT, SHARKOV CALLED ON HERZ EARLY MORNING OCT 16 TO REPORT THAT HE HAD RECEIVED TELEGRAM FROM MOSCOW STATING THAT MAYORS' DELEGATION COULD NOT MAKE VISIT AS PLANNED BUT WOULD BE PREPARED TO COME AT SOME LATER TIME. HERZ DECLARED THAT SENAT SAW NO VALUE IN SUBSEQUENT "ISOLATED" VISIT AND NOTED THAT HE HAD HAD IMPRESSION FOR SEVERAL DAYS THAT SOVIETS HAD ONLY BEEN SEEKING CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 USBERL 02105 171712Z

PRETEXT TO AVOID CARRYING THROUGH WITH AGREED ARRANGEMENTS. HE WAS DEEPLY DISAPPOINTED AT SOVIET DECISION AND COULD NOT ESCAPE POINTING OUT THAT BLAME FOR THIS FRESH "CHARGING OF ATMOSPHERE" RESTED SOLELY WITH SOVIETS. SHARKOV EXPRESSED REGRET THAT HE COULD GIVE NO EXPLANATION FOR CANCELLATION, BUT REJECTED NOTION THAT SOVIETS WERE ALONE AT FAULT. RATHER, SOVIET SIDE HAD GAINED

IMPRESSION THAT SENAT WAS ATTEMPTING TO ALTER LONG-STANDING ARRANGEMENTS. FOR INSTANCE, SENAT WAS NOT PREPARED TO GIVE ASSURANCES ON GUIDELINES TO PRESS AND HERZ HAD SPOKEN OF BERLIN VISIT AS BEING "IN COURSE OF" FRG TOUR RATHER THAN, AS INVITATIONS STATED, "AT CONCLUSION." HERZ REMARKED THAT WHOLE EPISODE MADE CLEAR HOW SOVIET BERLIN POLICY WOULD DEVELOP IN NEAR FUTURE.

4. IN ANNOUNCING CANCELLATION OF VISIT TO PRESS, SENAT SPOKESMAN EMPHASIZED THAT SENAT HAD ABIDED BY ALL OF ITS OBLIGATIONS RE VISIT AND HAD DONE NOTHING TO JUSTIFY SOVIET ACTION. HE ADDED THAT SOVIET ATTITUDE IN PRESENT CASE WOULD LEAD TO RECONSIDERATION AS TO EXTENT SENAT SHOULD IN FUTURE BECOME INVOLVED IN EVENTS SPONSORED BY SOVIETS IN WEST BERLIN. SPECIFICALLY, IT COULD NOT BE RULED OUT THAT SENAT WOULD WITHDRAW SUPPORT FROM "SIBERIAN WEEKS" (EXHIBITS, ARTISTIC PERFORMANCES, ETC.) SCHEDULED TO BE HELD IN BERLIN NOV 17-30 -- IN WHICH, INCIDENTALLY, LOCAL SOVIETS HAVE INVESTED MUCH TIME AND ENERGY. KUNZE OF SENAT TELLS US THAT HE EXPECTS ENTIRE SENAT, INCLUDING GOVMAYOR, TO BOYCOTT SOVIET NOV 7 RECEPTION AS ANOTHER EXPRESSION OF DISPLEASURE.

5. GOVMAYOR SCHUETZ EXPRESSED HIS REGRET IN COURSE OF RIAS INTERVIEW OCT 16 THAT VISIT HAD BEEN CANCELLED. AS "CITY OF FRG" BERLIN HAD BEEN PREPARED TO SHOW VISITORS CROSS SECTION OF URBAN LIFE. HE COULD NOT IMAGINE THAT THERE HAD BEEN "FORMAL REASONS" FOR CANCELLATION AND SPECULATED THAT "DIFFICULTIES AT HOME" MIGHT HAVE OCCASIONED EARLY RETURN TO SOVIET UNION. CDU HOUSE OF REPS FRAKTION CHAIRMAN LUMMER
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PAGE 04 USBERL 02105 171712Z

REACTED IN HARSH TONE, CHARACTERIZING MOSCOW ATTITUDE AS "A DELIBERATE AFFRONT WHICH CASTS A SPOTLIGHT ON THE ALLEGED SOVIET READINESS TO FURTHER DETENTE WITH THE FRG." THIS ATTITUDE, HE ADDED, AMOUNTED TO CONFIRMATION THAT SOVIET UNION REMAINED FIRMLY COMMITTED TO GOAL OF ISOLATING WEST BERLIN. LOCAL PRESS GAVE PROMINENT FRONT-PAGE COVERAGE OCT 17 TO NEWS OF SOVIET CANCELLATION.

6. COMMENT: SOVIET DECISION REFLECTS IN OUR VIEW IDEA BEHIND ARTICLE 7 OF GDR-SOVIET TREATY OF OCT 1, I.E., DEVELOPMENT OF SOVIET "TIES" WITH WEST BERLIN COMBINED WITH NON-RECOGNITION OF FRG AUTHORITY TO REPRESENT WSB'S INTERESTS ABROAD (REFTEL). ABOVE INCIDENT MAY THEREFORE BE FIRST INDICATION

WE HAVE HAD THAT SOVIETS INTEND TO BACK ARTICLE 7
THEORY WITH DEEDS AS WELL AS WORDS. IF SO, SENAT
MIGHT WELL REACT BY DISCOURAGING BILATERAL SOVIET-
WSB TIES, E.G., SIBERIAN WEEK. DVIS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AGREEMENTS, PRESS COMMENTS, MAYOR, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 OCT 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975USBERL02105
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750361-0981
From: USBERLIN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751045/aaaabnzw.tel
Line Count: 173
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 USBERLIN 2044
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <28 MAY 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <07 OCT 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CANCELLATION OF SOVIET MAYORS' VISIT TO WEST BERLIN
TAGS: PGOV, PFOR, WB, GE, UR
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006